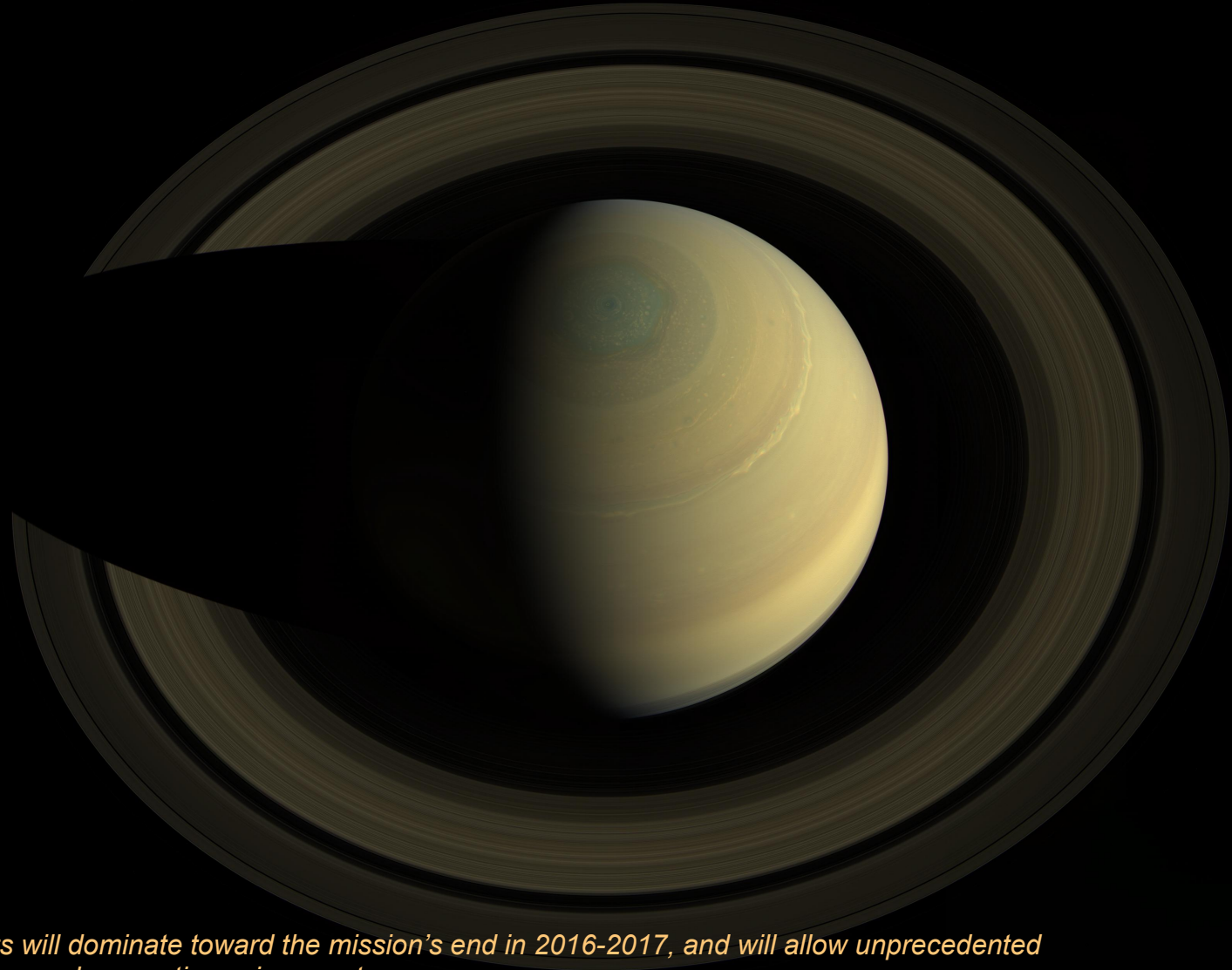


On Top of the (Ringed) World

This natural-color view of Saturn was made possible by a rare, near-polar orbit Oct. 10, 2013 that allowed NASA's Cassini spacecraft to look down upon the sunlit northern hemisphere.

When Cassini arrived in 2004, Saturn's wintry northern hemisphere sported a bluish hue. Nine years later, the now-summery northern hemisphere has taken on golden tones. At the pole, the mysterious hexagon weather pattern remains bluish.



Similar, highly-inclined orbits will dominate toward the mission's end in 2016-2017, and will allow unprecedented studies of Saturn's poles, rings and magnetic environment.